

# **Citizen Participation Plan**



**City Of Wilmington  
Department of Development Services  
Community Development Division  
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# **City of Wilmington**

## **Citizen Participation Plan**

### **CONTENTS**

Introduction.....	2
Consultation.....	2
General Consultation.....	2
Lead-Based Paint.....	3
Non-Housing Community Development Needs.....	3
Public Housing.....	3
Citizen Participation.....	3
Coordination of Information.....	3
Formal Public Comment Periods.....	4
Public Hearings.....	4
Open Meetings.....	4
Availability of Information and Documents.....	5
Development of the Consolidated Plan.....	5
Displacement.....	5
Technical Assistance.....	6
Persons With Disabilities.....	6
Non-English Speaking Persons.....	6
Complaint Procedures.....	6
Appendix A Definitions.....	7
Appendix B Citizen Participation Contacts.....	8

# **CITY OF WILMINGTON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

## **INTRODUCTION**

As a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Entitlement recipient, the City of Wilmington is required to have and actively implement a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Citizen Participation Plan. This plan sets forth the policies and procedures for citizen involvement in the development of the Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan (Consolidated Plan), annual action plans, substantial amendments to the plan and the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 24 CFR Part 91, Subpart B. (See Appendix A for definitions.)

The City of Wilmington seeks to exceed the minimum federal requirements and make citizen participation a reality at all stages of the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Consolidated Plan. The Community Development Division (CDD) staff will act as the agent for the City of Wilmington to implement all aspects of the Citizen Participation Plan. Implementation will be accomplished through two processes: consultation and direct citizen participation.

Consultation includes consulting with public and private agencies; with organizations concerned with lead-based paint hazards; with state and other local government jurisdictions; and with the Wilmington Housing Authority (24 CFR 91.100).

Citizen participation includes actively encouraging citizens who are affected by the Consolidated Plan to participate in the planning process, submission of substantial amendments and development of the CAPER opportunities to participate through the following methods:

- Coordination of information with agencies and organizations concerned about housing and community development;
- Formal public comment periods;
- Public hearings;
- Open meetings;
- Availability of information and documents
- Technical assistance;
- Accommodations for persons with disabilities
- Accommodations for non-English-speaking persons; and
- Complaint procedures.

## **CONSULTATION**

GENERAL: During the development of the five-year Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan and the annual action plans, the CDD staff will consult with public and private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services and social services (including those focusing on services to children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, homeless persons). Agencies to be contacted include, but are not limited to, those listed in Appendix B.

Consultation will include individual and group meetings, and requests for data related to housing, health services, social services children, the homeless, HIV/AIDS, the elderly and person with disabilities.

LEAD-BASED PAINT: CDD staff will consult with local health and child-welfare agencies on data related to lead-based paint hazards and poisonings, including health department data on the addresses of housing units in which children have been identified as lead poisoned.

NON-HOUSING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS: The CDD staff will consult with adjacent units of government concerning any non-housing needs identified during the development of the five-year Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan and the annual action plans. Such units of government will include, but will not be limited to, New Hanover County.

Should non-housing needs be included in the plans, they will be submitted to the State CDBG offices as required in 24 CFR Part 91, Subpart B, 91.100 (a) (3).

PUBLIC HOUSING: The CDD staff will consult with the Wilmington Housing Authority concerning public housing needs and the planned Comprehensive Grant program activities to insure that CDBG activities are coordinated to help achieve the comprehensive community development goals. This will be especially true with regard to local drug elimination, neighborhood improvement programs, and resident programs and services.

## **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

These policies and procedures are designed to encourage participation of low- and moderate-income persons, particularly those living in slum and blighted areas and in areas where CDBG funds are proposed, and by residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods as defined by the city. The city especially encourages the participation of minorities, non-English speaking persons and persons with disabilities.

COORDINATION OF INFORMATION: In addition to those low-income residents living in targeted revitalization areas, persons living in public housing, transitional housing, shelters and housing for people with disabilities or HIV/AIDS will be especially encouraged to participate in the process of developing and implementing the Consolidated Plan.

The CDD staff will make information available concerning the development and implementation of Consolidated Plan to the Wilmington Housing Authority and agencies or organizations specializing in transitional housing, shelters, and housing for people with disabilities or HIV/AIDS. The intention is to have such notices published in agency or organizational newsletters, posted in their facilities, and made available at the Housing Authority's regular monthly meetings. In addition, information will be posted on the city's Government Cable Channel (Channel 8).

Such information will include, but will not be limited to, notices of general information about CDBG activities, community meetings, public hearings, and availability of copies of the Consolidated Plan, substantial amendments and the CAPER.

**FORMAL PUBLIC COMMENT PERIODS:** The general public and interested agencies have 30 days to comment on the Consolidated Plan, the annual action plans and substantial amendments before the final plans or amendments are submitted to HUD. (A substantial amendment is an amendment to the Consolidated Plan or annual plan and is one which includes the addition of a new activity or priority; a change in the nature of an activity, its location, or its target population such that different citizens will be impacted by it; or a change of more than 50 percent in the amount of funds allocated to an activity.) In case of a natural disaster that requires an immediate but substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan, the general public and interested agencies will have 10 days to comment on those amendments that are directly related to the disaster.

The public has 15 days to comment on the CAPER, the Citizen Participation Plan and substantial amendments to the Citizen Participation Plan prior to their submission to HUD.

Notices for the comment periods will be published in the *Wilmington Star-News* and the *Wilmington Journal*, and on the city's Government Cable Channel (Channel 8) and in City Hall. News releases will be sent from the city's Public Relations Office to local media, announcing the comment period and location of draft copies. Written notice will be sent to the Wilmington Housing Authority, the agencies listed in Appendix B and churches located in the CDBG designated area. A summary of the comments or views not accepted and the reasons, therefore, will be attached to the final plan, amendment or CAPER.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:** The CDD staff will hold a minimum of two public hearings each year to obtain citizens' views on the Consolidated Plan and the annual action plans, the program performance, and to respond to proposals and questions. One hearing will be held before the Consolidated Plan or the action plan for that year is published for comment.

Hearings will be held in the evening for the convenience of working people; at a location convenient to the potential and actual beneficiaries of the plan; and accommodations will be made, if necessary, for persons with disabilities. Anyone with a hearing or sight disability, or any non-English speaking residents may contact the CDD 24 hours in advance in order for arrangements to be made to accommodate their needs at the hearing.

Notices for the public hearings will be published at least 14 days in advance in the *Wilmington Star-News* and the *Wilmington Journal*, and on the city's Government Cable Channel (Channel 8) and in City Hall. News releases will be sent from the city's Public Relations Office to all local media, announcing the date, time and place of the public hearings. Written notice will be sent to the Wilmington Housing Authority, the agencies listed in Appendix B and churches located in the CDBG designated area. A summary of the comments or views not accepted and the reasons, therefore, will be attached to the final plan, amendment or CAPER.

**OPEN MEETINGS:** Citizen meetings concerning development of the Consolidated Plan, annual plans or neighborhood revitalization will be held at various times and in various locations to accommodate

the working hours of the beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries of the plan. Notices for such meetings will be published at least 14 days in advance in the *Wilmington Star-News* and the *Wilmington Journal*, and on the city's Government Cable Channel (Channel 8) and in City Hall. News releases will be sent from the city's Public Relations Office to all local media, announcing the date, time and place of the public hearings. Written notice will be sent to the Wilmington Housing Authority, the agencies listed in Appendix B and churches located in the CDBG designated area.

Other meetings, related to the development, implementation or review of the Consolidated Plan, annual plans or neighborhood revitalization, will be open to all beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries of the plan, according to the North Carolina Open Meetings Law.

**AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS**: Draft copies of the Consolidated Plan, the annual action plans, CAPER and Citizen Participation Plan will be available in the CDD office and the City Clerk's office for viewing from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Additional single copies may be obtained from CDD at no charge.

Following submission of the Consolidated Plan, the annual action plans, CAPER and Citizen Participation Plan, final copies of each will be available in the CDD office for viewing from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Additional single copies may be obtained from CDD at no charge.

Copies of the draft and final Consolidated Plan, the annual action plans, CAPER and Citizen Participation Plan will be distributed to the main New Hanover Public Library in downtown Wilmington and the Wilmington Housing Authority. A brochure will be developed in the 2001-02 planning year describing the process for submitting requests for funding, the priorities of the Consolidated Plan and the annual review process for developing the CAPER.

In accordance with North Carolina state law, housing and community development records belonging to the City of Wilmington are considered public information. Exceptions are records that contain confidential information about individuals participating in or benefiting from the CDBG programs.

**DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN**: Before adoption of the Consolidated Plan or the annual Action Plan, the CDD will make available to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties information about the plan, including the amount of assistance the City of Wilmington expects to receive (including extended funding, additional grants and program income), and the range of activities that may be undertaken with those funds, including the estimated amount that will benefit persons of low- and moderate-income.

**DISPLACEMENT**: The CDD will make every effort possible to minimize displacement of persons affected by any CDBG or HOME activities. Development of a displacement policy is in progress. When the policy is completed, details on displacement and the type and level of assistance will be made available to all rehabilitation loan applicants and to future applicants immediately after the loan process has begun.

TECHINICAL ASSISTANCE: The CDD will provide technical assistance, through training classes at least once each year, in the following areas:

- Development of proposals for interested parties (to be conducted following the announcement of funding availability but before development of the plan is completed);
- State and federal requirements for compliance for those agencies and organizations selected to receive funding through the Consolidated Plan (to be conducted at the beginning of the funding year).

The CDD will attempt to provide individual technical assistance upon request or at the direction of the CDD director to groups representing persons of low- and moderate-income representing persons of low- and moderate-income and to those agencies and organizations selected to receive funding through the Consolidated Plan. Requests for individual assistance should be made in writing with a reasonable amount of time to schedule and plan for the technical assistance.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: Public hearings and community meetings will be held in locations accessible to persons with restricted mobility. A sign-language interpreter will be available at public hearings and community meetings, if requested at least 72 hours in advance.

For inquires about the CDBG program, the city maintains a TDD system for all hearing-impaired citizens. Access to the system is available (with the proper equipment) by calling 910-341-7836.

CDD staff is available to assist visually impaired citizens by reading materials to them, upon request. Notices of public hearings, meetings and various other CDBG information will be available verbally on the city's Government Cable Channel (Channel 8) for hearing impaired citizens.

NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING PERSONS: Interpreters will be available for non-English speaking citizens, at public hearings and community meetings, if requested at least 72 hours in advance. A copy of the Consolidated Plan, the annual action plans, substantial amendments and the CAPER will be made available in Spanish from the CDD, if requested at least five working days in advance.

Notices of public hearings, meetings and various other CDBG information will be available in Spanish on the city's Government Cable Channel (Channel 8). Notices of public hearings, meetings and various other CDBG information will be made available, in Spanish, to neighborhood and community organizations and churches serving the Hispanic community.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES: Written or oral complaints concerning the planning, implementation or reporting of the Consolidated Plan should be addressed to the CDD director. The division will make every effort to respond, in writing, within 15 working days of receipt of the written or oral complaint. Should the complain ant not be satisfied, he or she may arrange a meeting with the CDD director to discuss the matter. Any citizen may contact the city manager or mayor, or address city council at its regular meeting to discuss problems not resolved at staff level.

## **APPENDIX A DEFINITIONS**

**ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**: The document that describes the needs, resources, priorities and proposed activities to be undertaken over a one-year period with respect to HUD programs, including the CDBG program, and is part of the Consolidate Plan

**CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REPORT (CAPER)**: The document that provides HUD with the necessary information to assess each grantee's ability to carry out its programs in compliance with applicable regulations and requirements and describes the grantee's program achievements to its citizens.

**CONSOLIDATED HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN** (or "Consolidated Plan"): The document that is submitted to HUD that serves as the planning document (comprehensive housing affordability strategy and community development plan) of the jurisdiction and an application for funding under any of the Community Planning and Development formula grant programs (CDBG, ESG, HOME OR HOPWA), which is prepared in accordance with the process prescribed in 24 CFR Part 91. The plan describes needs, resources, priorities and proposed activities to be undertaken over a five-year period with respect to HUD programs, including the CDBG program.

**ENTITLEMENT**: the designation of a metropolitan city that is entitled to receive funds under the Entitlement grant program, as determined by formula set forth in Section 106.

**SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT**: an amendment to the Consolidated Plan or annual plan and is one which includes the addition of a new activity or priority; a change in the nature of an activity, its location, or its target population such that different citizens will be impacted by it; or a change of more than 50 percent in the amount of funds allocated to an activity.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION CONTACTS**

The Arc of North Carolina  
Boys & Girls Clubs  
Child Advocacy Commission  
Cape Fear Community College  
Cape Fear Council of Governments  
Cape Fear Habitat for Humanity  
Cape Fear Hospice  
Cape Fear Literacy Council  
CHDO'S  
City of Wilmington  
    City Council  
    Engineering  
    Fire  
    Planning and Zoning  
    Police  
    Public Services and Facilities  
    Public Utilities  
CURE AIDS  
DARE  
Family Services of the Lower Cape Fear  
Former Sub-recipients  
Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce  
Hispanic/Latino Chamber of Commerce  
Historic Wilmington Foundation  
Homeless Organizations and Domestic  
Violence Shelters

Legal Services of the Lower Cape Fear  
Neighborhood Associations  
New Hanover Community Action, Inc.  
New Hanover County  
    Aging  
    Board of Education  
    Commissioners  
    Cooperative Extension Services  
    Health Department  
    Keep America Beautiful  
    Social Services  
    Vocational Rehabilitation  
New Hanover County Human Relations  
Commission  
New Hanover Regional Medical Center  
SE Black Chamber of Commerce  
SE Regional Center for MH/DD/SAS  
The Community Action Group  
UNC-Wilmington  
United Way of the Lower Cape Fear  
Wilmington Housing Authority  
Wilmington Housing Finance & Development  
Wilmington Interdenominational Ministerial  
Alliance  
YMCA/YWCA